

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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SENATOR COORDSEN: Senator Matzke, would you respond to a question, please?

SENATOR MATZKE: Yes, Senator Abboud.

SENATOR ABOUD: Senator Matzke, I was looking through the fiscal note on this bill and trying to figure out, exactly, how this is...how this bill's going to work. The...does this bill go...it talks about here an 18-month period. After the bill is enacted, there'll be an 18-month period where they're going to come back to the Legislature and discuss these rail crossings. Is that the thrust of the bill or do they take control immediately over this whole issue?

SENATOR MATZKE: Well, the thrust of the bill is to set in motion a process for studying the problem and asking the Department of Roads to, by promulgating rules and regulations, to establish a procedure. Now the fiscal note is somewhat limited. The Department of Roads already has a Division of Rail Transportation, and that Division of Rail Transportation has really one employee, a lady who is a civil engineer who has really done an outstanding job of coordinating with cities and counties on crossing matters with the Department of Roads. Unfortunately, she is leaving the Department of Roads to go to another job and this bill...or the fiscal note envisages that the Department of Roads will probably have to add two employees to handle the work that will be the responsibility of the Department of Roads, and I think the fiscal note is in the area of eighty or ninety thousand dollars. I don't have it in front of me. Perhaps you do.

SENATOR ABOUD: So the Department of Roads handles some of these issue already in...with rail crossings? Is that what you're trying to tell me?

SENATOR MATZKE: Yes. What they have been doing is somewhat acting like a mediator. There are some funds available to the state, through essentially what's a ton-mile tax, raises I believe somewhat in the area of \$6 million a year. And when a crossing is being closed, usually in conjunction with the building of an overpass,...